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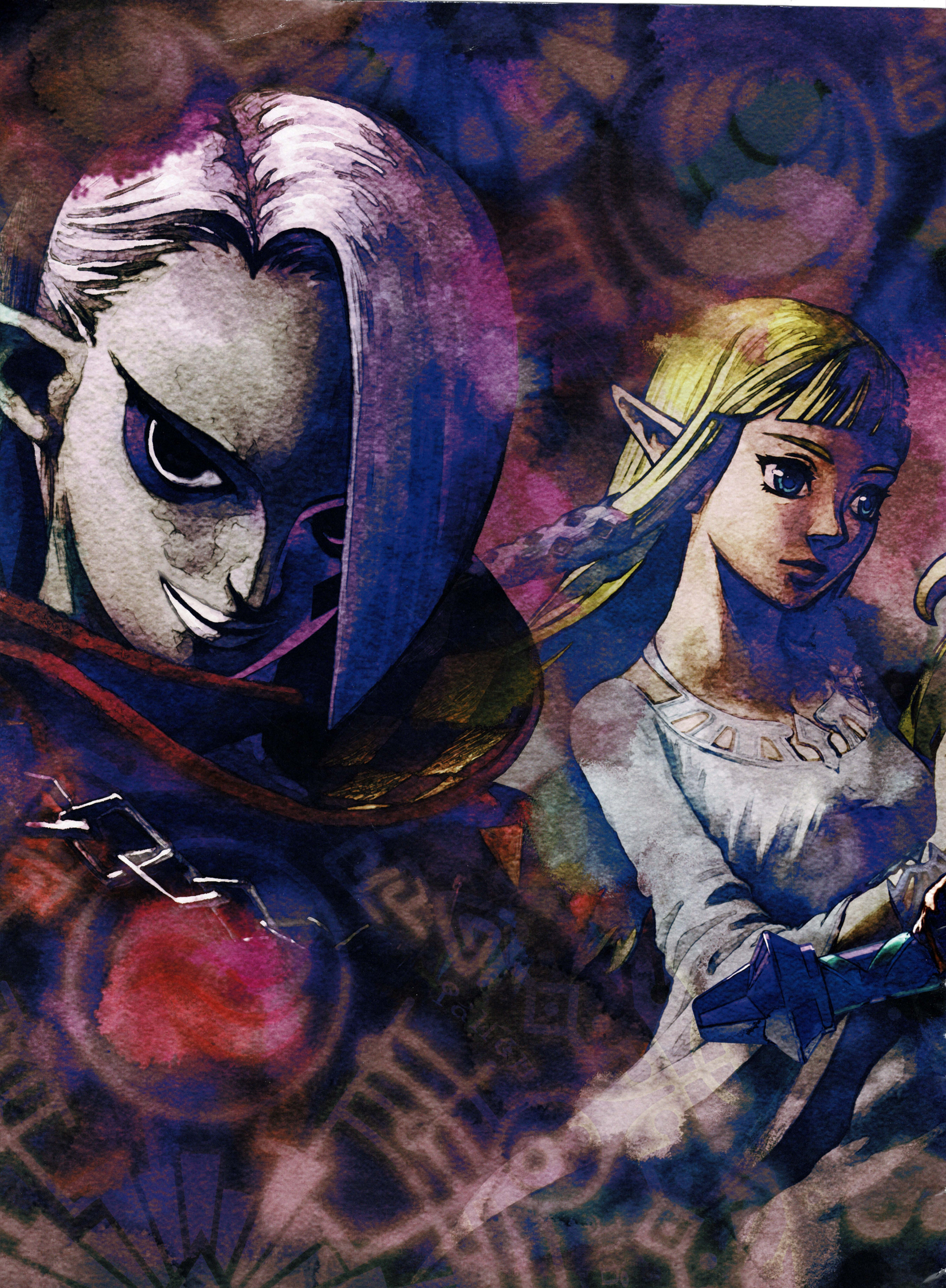

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SPECIAL ZELDA ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

MCV has joined forces with Nintendo to celebrate all things *Zelda*, including a look at the upcoming *Skyward Sword*, a history of the franchise and industry opinion

Happy Anniversary to a video game Legend

Nintendo celebrates 25 years of the greatest games franchise on earth with new games and Orchestral concert

by **Christopher Dring**

25 YEARS ago a Legend was launched in Japan – and with it the most acclaimed series in gaming was born.

Since then there has been 15 main titles, with a 16th – *The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword* – out next week on November 18th.

The series has sold well over 50m units globally, and the last two Wii games have been big UK sellers. 2006's *Twilight Princess* has sold 441,603 units to-date, while 2007's *Link's Crossbow Training* has shifted 315,857 copies.

And Nintendo has been celebrating the fact, with a slew of new products and a Symphony Concert, which reached Europe last month for a live performance featuring the London Philharmonic Orchestra.

"We're always trying to craft music that stays in the mind and is associated with memories," said Koji Kondo, *Zelda*'s acclaimed composer.

"As I rarely see the people playing the games, it is hard know how they respond. How popular this concert has been certainly helps, and it has made me very happy to see."

Zelda is best known for its critical performance. *Ocarina of Time* is the highest rated Metacritic game ever, with a score of 99. And every home console *Zelda* game since has scored 95 or above.

> ***Over the 25 years of Zelda, there's always been a surplus of new ideas.***
>
> *Eiji Aonuma, Nintendo*

"What we've always aimed for is not about fitting one particular game genre, but to keep providing unique experiences that people can enjoy," said *Zelda*'s producer Eiji Aonuma.

"Of course there are certain techniques and basics that are similar throughout the series, but really what we are striving to do with each new Zelda is offer a new world for people to enjoy and to experience.

"Over those 25 years, while we've been working on *Zelda* and we've always had a wealth of ideas, which I think is what has kept us going all these years."

Both Eiji Aonuma (right) and Koji Kondo (far right) celebrated 25 years of The Legend of Zelda at a special London concert last month

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Skyward Sword is 'a triumph'

Huge marketing campaign planned for Nintendo's 'deepest and richest game ever' ● Game secures impressive press coverage and review scores ● Online ad push will be one of Nintendo UK's biggest

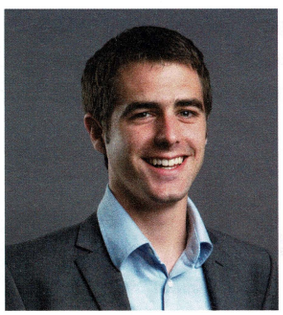
NINTENDO has prepared a major marketing blitz for its biggest *Zelda* game yet.

Skyward Sword has already racked up major press coverage in *Metro* and *The Independent*, plus it received the Front cover of *The Guardian Guide*. It has also scored impressive review scores – including a 10/10 in *Edge*, only the fourteenth time a game has obtained such a result in the magazines 18-year history.

And now the platform holder is spending big to ensure the game is a major Christmas seller.

"*Skyward Sword* is one of the deepest and richest game experiences ever produced by Nintendo, taking more than 100 staff members over five years to produce," said Nintendo's junior product manager Roger Langford.

"For the first time in a *Zelda* game you can use Wii MotionPlus technology to precisely control flight and experience a distinctly unique combat system. For launch we also have a bundle containing an exclusive gold Wii Remote Plus.



> ***Skyward Sword is one of the deepest game experiences ever produced by Nintendo.***
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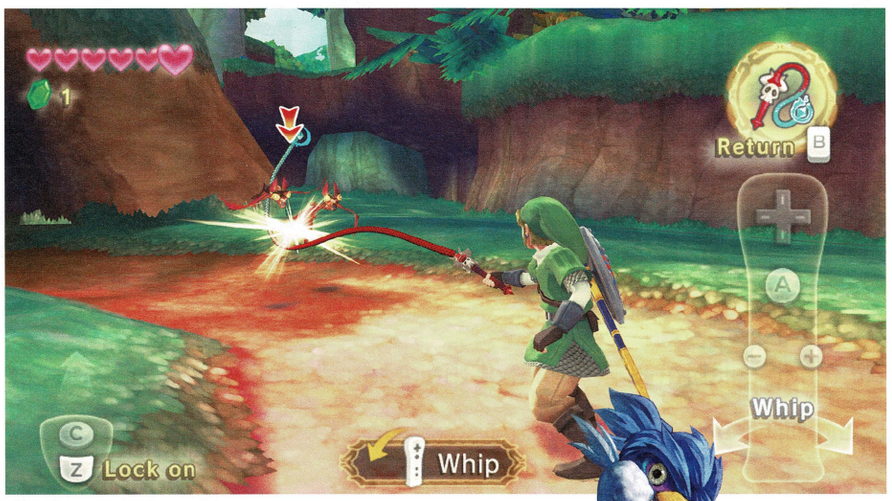


"We are confident that existing fans and those new to the franchise will enjoy *Skyward Sword*."

The game's marketing campaign has already begun, kicking off with MPUs in September running across major gaming sites, as well as print ads in specialist publications including *Edge*, *GamesTM* and *GamesMaster*.

Nintendo has also taken *Skyward Sword* on-tour with appearances at GAMEfest, Eurogamer Expo, plus a takeover at GameCity.

On top of that, there are 60- and 40-second TV ads that will showcase the game, plus Nintendo is planning one of its biggest ever online campaigns for launch, taking over all major game sites plus *IMBD* and *Sky Sports*.

The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword hits shelves on November 18th.

Industry hails top Zelda moments

THE UK games trade has united in praise for one of the greatest video games series of all time.

Key media, publishing, development and retail figures have highlighted their favourite Zelda moments, whilst celebrating the series' remarkable achievement of remaining one of the industry's most essential video games – even after 25 years.

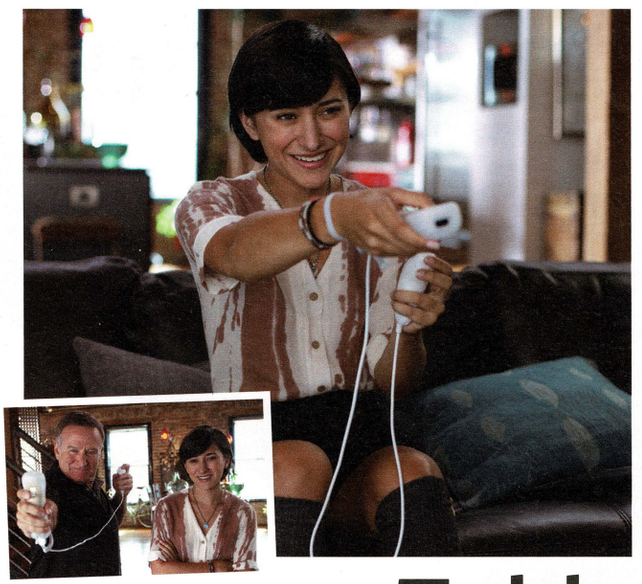
"When I entered the Temple of Time to take hold of the Master Sword and left seven years later as the fully grown Hero of Time, words failed me for the first time ever whilst playing a video game," said Ubisoft's UK marketing director Murray Pannell.

"As I took in the ruin and devastation that surrounded me where once a bustling and vibrant town market had stood, it occurred to me then that this game was something special. It is no surprise at all that the *Zelda* Franchise celebrates its 25th birthday when it is able to conjure up remarkable moments like this."

Even David Reeves, current Capcom COO who worked in opposition to Nintendo at PlayStation for many years, had nothing but warm words about the franchise.

"There was always this massive anticipation of everybody waiting to buy the next version," he said. "Everything stopped for *Zelda*. The Legend lives."

Meanwhile GAME Group CEO Ian Shepherd highlighted watching his kids play *Ocarina of Time 3D* on their Nintendo 3DS, 13 years after he originally played the game on the N64. "Proof positive," he said, "that great game design is timeless." Proof indeed.



Meet the real **Zelda**

Acting legend Robin Williams named his daughter after Princess Zelda herself. Here, Zelda Williams shares her thoughts on the series

Why did your parents name you Princess Zelda?
Zelda Williams: It was brought up by my older brother Zach and his best friend. they were like five at the time, and they ran in as my parents were discussing baby names for me. They threw in their two cents and my of parents loved it. They love the games and it is a great name for a girl.

It's nice to see a celebrity back something they are genuinely a fan of.
ZW: I think Dad has only done a commercial once before and that was in the 1980s. We don't really do that kind of thing. And the only reason why we did this time is because the games do mean a lot to us.

What's your favourite Zelda?
ZW: *Majora's Mask*.There are a lot of *Zelda* fans that think it is the best *Zelda* game. And there are a few that think it is the worst. In terms of how involved I got, that one was by far my favourite. The new one is probably going to come really close to that. I am a very visual person as well, and *Skyward Sword* is so pretty.

It was also quite a dark game.
ZW: Yeah, incredibly. It was similar to a Tim Burton film.

Have you played the new Skyward Sword?
ZW: I have played it a little bit. I have fought a couple of the bosses. But it was one of those things where I played what was at E3. What I played was really beautiful, fun and really vibrant. Everything looks bejewelled. It is a much more whimsical, which I think is going to be amazing.

If Ganon kidnapped you, who would you like to come rescue you?
ZW: Oh God. There are a group of four guy friends I have in LA that are like my big brothers. And they are always chomping at the bit for chivalrous moments. I think they'd come running. And I'd be thoroughly entertained by that.

But if I was going to go with the creative answer... well I wouldn't want dad to rescue me, that would be strange.

Ok, I've got it. In the movie version of *Zelda* where I get kidnapped, Garrett Hedlund (of *Tron* fame) would be Link.

LEADER

THE GREATEST GAMES SERIES ON THE PLANET

THE LEGEND *of Zelda: Ocarina of Time* was the first *Zelda* game that I played.

It was the dying days of 1998, and I wasn't all that in to video games. I had shared a Super Nintendo with my brother, but it was really his machine. I liked my books.

But on December 25th, 1998, nestled under the Christmas tree was a new Nintendo 64 and a copy of *Ocarina of Time*. I still had to share these with my brother, but this time it was really my machine and my game.

In the years that followed I have played and loved every *Zelda* game released before and since. Yep, even black sheep *Zelda II*.

It's easy to forget that when it is not busy expanding the games industry's audience, Nintendo is the most gifted developer on the planet. And *The Legend of Zelda* is the platform holder at its talented and creative best.

"Each new Zelda game is greeted by critical acclaim. The 10/10 Edge gave to Skyward Sword wasn't just impressive. It was inevitable."

All of the main home console *Zelda* adventures released since *A Link To The Past* have a Metacritic score of 95 or above. It is a remarkable level of consistency and fans expect that degree of excellence with each new release.

The 10/10 *Edge* gave to *Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword* isn't just expected. It was inevitable.

And what a game *Skyward Sword* is shaping up to be. A lovely visual style that looks unlike anything else on the market, plus full Wii MotionPlus support for a more accurate combat experience. And according to Nintendo this is also the biggest *Zelda* so far. Friday, November 18th just cannot come soon enough.

13 years on since *Ocarina of Time* and here I am, writing and working in the games industry. Telling you that the game changed my life may sound like the kind of hyperbole you always hear when people describe *Ocarina*, but I genuinely mean it.

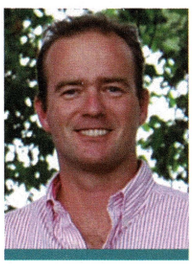
Now it's *Skyward Sword*'s turn to inspire a new generation of youngsters – perhaps those who have yet to experience Wii outside of *Just Dance* or *Wii Sports*. A new generation of designers, writers and developers.

So happy anniversary Princess Zelda, and here's to another 25 years of the greatest game series of all time.

Christopher Dring

Industry's magic moments

The UK games trade shares its favourite Legend of Zelda moments



MURRAY PANNELL UK Marketing Director, Ubisoft

Thinking back on my first playthrough of *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time* brings to mind a number of moments that left me in awe. From the first time I entered the Great Deku Tree as a small child to much later in the game when I leapt to freedom with Epona to escape from Lon Lon Ranch; rarely has a game captured so many charmed and emotive moments in a single experience.

However, one moment stands out for me as one of the greatest in the history of video games. When I entered the Temple of Time to take hold of the Master Sword and left seven years later as the fully grown Hero of Time, words failed me for the first time ever whilst playing a game. As I took in the ruin and devastation that surrounded me where once a bustling and vibrant town market had stood, it occurred to me then that this game was something special. It is no surprise at all that the *Zelda* franchise celebrates its 25th birthday when it is able to conjure up remarkable moments like this.

KEZA MACDONALD UK Editor, IGN

Zelda is a series full of moments – picking just one is close to impossible. But the descent into ancient Hyrule on the sea bed of *Wind Waker*'s brave new world is, for me, one of the most beautiful moments in gaming. When Hyrule Castle reanimates, rescued from its suspended animation when Link once again pulls the Master Sword from the stone, the sea comes rushing in, and in the end it's all swept away – something that seemed to signal a new beginning for the *Zelda* series whilst also paying touching tribute to its iconic motifs.

JON ROOKE UK Marketing Director, THQ

So many to choose from but for me I think it would have to be the first time that you get Epona in *Twilight Princess* and take a ride out over the fields. There's not many games that get horses that right.

ANDREW THOMPSON Head of Games, Asda

My favourite *Zelda* moment has to be the release of *Ocarina of Time* on the N64. I was working at HMV Birmingham High Street at the time, and not only was the game one of the greatest home console releases of all time, but is was a huge sales success. It came out late in December 1998, and I remember selling out all copies at £60. There was a huge shortfall in supply and I reckon we could have sold it for £100 and still sold out. What a game.

IAN SHEPHERD CEO, GAME Group

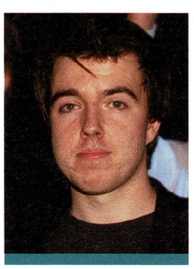
My favourite *Zelda* experience has – like many old fogey gamers – been watching my kids play *Ocarina of Time* on 3DS so many years after I played it on the N64. Proof positive that great game design is timeless.

> ***Ocarina of Time 3D is proof positive that great game design is timeless.***
>
> *Ian Shepherd, GAME Group*

> ***I was working at HMV during Ocarina of Time. I remember selling out of copies at £60, but there was such a shortfall I could have sold it for £100. What a game.***
>
> *Andrew Thompson, Asda*

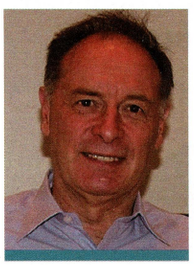
LAURA YATES Marketing Games Planner, HMV

Personally I think the use of 'Legend' in its title couldn't be a more appropriate word to describe this game. For me *Ocarina of Time* on the Nintendo 64 will always be my favourite version, though I never could quite nail Zelda's Lullaby. Here's to another 25 years.



STEVE HOGARTY Deputy Editor, Official Nintendo Magazine

Nabbing Epona from Lon Lon Ranch as grown-up Link remains my favourite moment. Like being thrown the keys to your grandad's battered old Fiesta, the horse represented unfettered freedom and the ability to easily explore the game world. Leaping the fence and giving a figurative two fingers to the corrupt ranchmaster was a real air-punching moment. Few moments in games have felt so immediately liberating.



DAVID REEVES
Chief Operating Officer, Capcom

My lasting memory of *Zelda,* and it is true to this day, is that despite having worked on the other side of the fence at PlayStation and now at Capcom, there was always this massive anticipation of everybody waiting to buy the next version. Everything stopped for *Zelda*. The Legend lives.

MAX BUTLER
General Manager, Advantage Distribution

Zelda is the original RPG, and is one of the longest-standing brands in the history of games – you don't survive that long, pushing towards 20 releases, without consistent sales. Retail continues to have faith in the brand, and with that sales history, who wouldn't? I'm confident that *Skyward Sword* will be in high demand this Christmas. Every pre-order campaign and release is my favourite *Zelda* time for me.

JAMES BINNS
Head of Edge International, Future

I came late to the party... 18 years ago when I clocked on as staff writer on unofficial Nintendo magazine *Total*. I got my hands on the Game Boy game *Legend of Zelda: Links Awakening*. A little game that looked simple, but I discovered was epic.

CRAIG OWENS
Games Editor, Edge

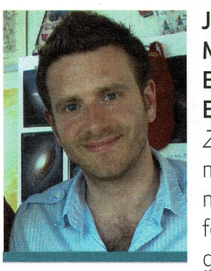
My favourite *Zelda* moment is the first time I walked around Clock Town on the third night of *Majora's Mask*. The third night basically repeated *Ocarina*'s trick of showing you a world you'd failed to save, but on a more intimate scale. There's a kind of darkly surreal carnival atmosphere, with the citizens drowning their sorrows in the Milk Bar, and the soldiers outside staring up at the moon's grinning face. It captured a fairy-tale horror.

CRAIG MCNICOL
Managing Director, Koch Media

As I sat down for the Nintendo E3 Conference in 2004 I was unaware that Nintendo were just about to unleash the best E3 presentation I've ever seen with *Twilight Princess* being the centrepiece – Miyamoto being the surprise on stage guest, donned with the Master Sword and shield. The fabulous action packed trailer and all the whooping and hollering from the crowd – it's my favourite *Zelda* moment of all time.

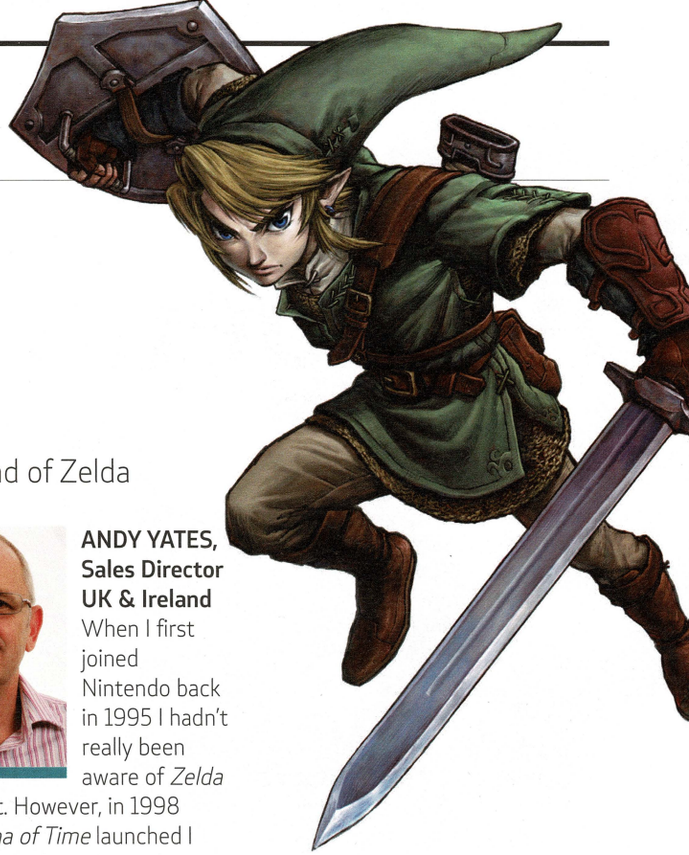
JON BURTON
Founder, Traveller's Tales

In recent years I've played through *Zelda* with my kids – from *Twilight* backwards to *Ocarina* – and came to admire what amazing games they are, but at the time they were released I couldn't understand what all the fuss was about.



JOHNNY MINKLEY
Editor, Eurogamer TV

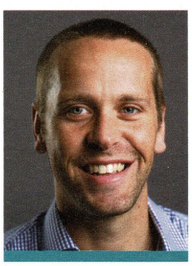
Zelda's most memorable moment is found in its greatest game: *Wind Waker*. It's when Link retrieves the Master Sword and the black and white underworld, frozen in time, comes vividly to life with a flood of colour. The artistic highpoint in the most strikingly beautiful game I've played.



My Zelda

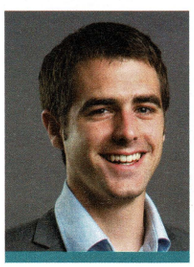
Nintendo's UK team shares their favourite memories from The Legend of Zelda

JAMES HONEYWELL, Marketing Manager
My favourite moment was when I was playing *The Legend of Zelda: Link to that Past* and I warped to the Dark World (as a pink rabbit) and realised just how much more there was to explore.



BEN TAYLOR, Head of Trade Marketing
Giving the fish as a sacrifice to Lord Jabu Jabu to enter his belly in *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time*.

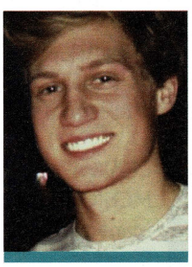
ROB LOWE, Marketing Manager
When you make Darunia dance by playing your Ocarina – one of the only times I've ever laughed out loud with joy at a video game.



ROGER LANGFORD, Junior Product Manager
The whole experience of *Ocarina of Time* on N64 was a magical one and I throughly enjoyed re-visiting it on 3DS. The *Zelda* series has always been at forefront of gaming in terms of controls. I thought that *Phantom Hourglass* and *Spirit Tracks* on DS showcased this brilliantly. The bit on *Phantom Hourglass* where you had to physically close and open the DS to press the crest against the sea chart in the Ocean Temple had me stumped for quite a while.

NEIL SCHOFIELD, National Account Manager
My favourite *Zelda* moment is remembering the people going onto to GameMaster and having trouble getting past level two, only to be ridiculed by Patrick Moore!

DAWN PAINE, Assistant General Manager & Marketing Director
My favourite Zelda memory came during *Twilight Princess* when I entered the Twlight realm and was transformed into a wolf! It allowed you to see whole new areas and track scents, opening up a whole new aspect to the game.



SAM PIERSON, Marketing Administrator
There are plenty moments within the games that I could say were my favourites. However, what topped it for me happened outside of the games. As a relatively new employee at Nintendo, arriving at the Symphony concert, seeing the whole thing come together and the incredible *Zelda* fan turnout – it was simply amazing. I felt so proud to be a part of something that so many people love.

ANDY YATES, Sales Director UK & Ireland
When I first joined Nintendo back in 1995 I hadn't really been aware of *Zelda* to be honest. However, in 1998 when *Ocarina of Time* launched I experienced my first play and became an advocate. I remember Link travelling through time and navigating various dungeons and I particularly remember the music playing an important role within the game. Just talking about it again like this brings back so many fond memories. I might even get my N64 out of the loft and have another crack at it – even the software packaging exudes quality with its black and gold box.

> ***Even the original Ocarina of Time packaging exudes quality with its black and gold box.***
>
> *Andy Yates, Nintendo*

A Legend is born

Through 25 years Zelda has delighted millions with its mix of exploration, action and puzzles. Over the next three pages we take a look at the story so far

IT IS 1985, and Shigeru Miyamoto is hard at work on two games for Nintendo's Famicom system (NES).

The first game needs no real introduction. It was *Super Mario Bros,* which was a big success worldwide.

The other was designed to be a more immersive experience. A game that players could save and come back to. It was The *Legend of Zelda*.

The game was a unique hybrid of genres, combining puzzle gameplay with action, exploration and even a basic RPG leveling up system.

It also introduced fans to the boy hero Link, the evil Ganon, the princess Zelda and the land of Hyrule – characters and worlds that would go on to define the series for 25 years.

From here on out the series would grow in popularity, often changing in tone and graphical style. A year later came the side-scrolling sequel, *Zelda II*, but it would be five years before gamers got a third title.

1993's *A Link To The Past* on the SNES was critically lauded and introduced the two-world concept, something which would become a staple of future *Zelda* titles.

It was at this time that Nintendo took *Zelda* portable in *Link's Awakening*. Despite being 8-bit and with a monochrome pallet, it still retained all the charm and innovation of its console big brother.

There was then a further five-year hiatus before *Zelda* reached another series high point – *Ocarina of Time*. The N64 classic is regarded as one of the greatest games ever.

What followed was the darker *Majora's Mask*, the lighter *Wind Waker*, a string of successful portable adventures, two multiplayer-based games, the Wii and GameCube hit *Twilight Princess* and a handful of spin-offs, too. And next up is *Skyward Sword*, a game that's already been greeted to rave reviews. Including a 10/10 from *Edge*.

Turn over the page for our run-through of every key step in *The Legend of Zelda* history.

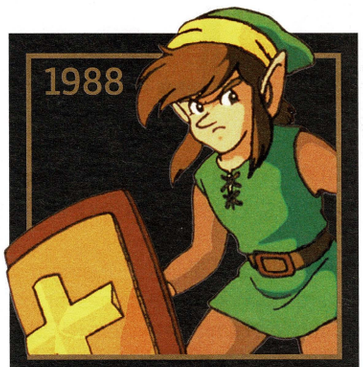
Zelda's look and style has gone through many changes during its 25 year history

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA™ 25th ANNIVERSARY

In celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Legend of Zelda series, we take a look back through the franchise's 25 year history to discover how it has evolved

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA

The groundbreaking NES original introduced gamers to the boy hero Link in his bid to find the Triforce, defeat the evil Ganon and save princess Zelda. It is available to download via the Virtual Console.



ZELDA II: THE ADVENTURE OF LINK

One year later the first sequel arrived, with Link on the hunt for the Triforce of Courage. The game included side-scrolling gameplay and is available over the Wii Virtual Console.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: MAJORA'S MASK

Ocarina of Time's sequel was a darker and more intimate affair, with a moon on a collision course with the land of Termina. It is available to download now via the Wii Virtual Console.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: ORACLE OF SEASONS & ORACLE OF AGES

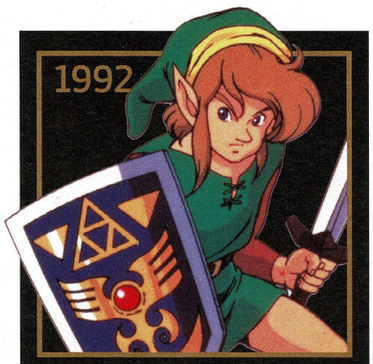
These two Capcom-developed Zelda games for Game Boy Color could be played in any order, but then linked together for the final, ultimate showdown.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: TWILIGHT PRINCESS

Link must discover his inner beast and hero in this adventure. This GameCube and Wii title featured a more mature visual style. It is available now on Wii as part of Nintendo's Selects range.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: PHANTOM HOURGLASS

Wind Waker's 3D cel-shaded visuals returned for *Zelda*'s DS debut. Using intuitive touch screen controls, players must travel the Great Sea to save Link's friend Tetra.



THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST

The iconic SNES game returned to the first game's top-down view, and featured two works – light and dark. It is also available to download via the Wii Virtual Console.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: LINK'S AWAKENING

Heralded as one of the greatest portable games ever, Nintendo managed to squeeze the *Zelda* formula onto a Game Boy cartridge. Link must wake the Wind Fish to escape Koholint Island.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: OCARINA OF TIME

Widely accepted as the greatest game ever, *Ocarina of Time* rendered Link in 3D for his N64 debut. It's been re-released a few times and can be downloaded via the Wii Virtual Console.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: LINK'S AWAKENING DX

To launch the Game Boy Color, Nintendo remade its hit *Link's Awakening* in full colour and with an extra dungeon. It is available to download now via the Nintendo eShop.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: WIND WAKER

This acclaimed GameCube game boasted beautiful cel-shaded visuals. In the adventure Link took to the seas to save his sister, and discovered the lost kingdom of Hyrule in the process.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: A LINK TO THE PAST & FOUR SWORDS

Four Swords was the first ever multiplayer Zelda game and was introduced as part of the remake of *A Link To The Past* on Game Boy Advance.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: FOUR SWORDS ADVENTURES

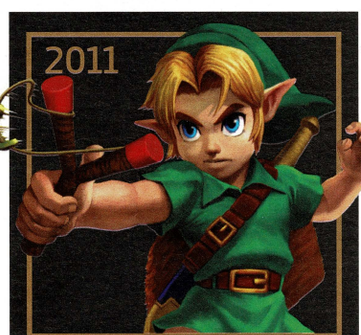
Four Swords' sequel was a GameCube release. Up to four players could use the Game Boy Advance as a controller and a second screen to defeat Shadow Link and the real villain, Ganon.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: THE MINISH CAP

Finally *Zelda* fans could find out how Link got his iconic green hat. Our hero shrinks down to miniature size in a game that acted as a prequel to the two *Four Swords* games.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: SPIRIT TRACKS

Zelda's body has been taken, leaving just her spirit behind. Link must team up with the princess in this sequel to *Phantom Hourglass*, which swaps boats for steam trains.



THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: OCARINA OF TIME 3D

The 1998 classic is back on Nintendo 3DS. Fans and newcomers can rediscover the epic adventure in remarkable 3D, with improved visuals and the addition of the Master Quest.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: FOUR SWORDS: ANNIVERSARY EDITION

This game is an updated version of the original *Four Swords*. It is available to download for free via the Nintendo eShop for both DSi and 3DS.

THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: SKYWARD SWORD

The biggest *Zelda* game ever will include Wii MotionPlus controls when it is released on November 18th. It acts as a prequel to *Ocarina of Time* and boasts fully orchestrated music.

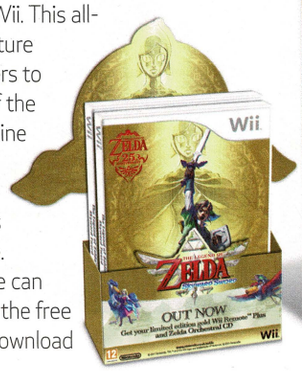
Sky's the limit

Nintendo has been celebrating Zelda's 25 years with re-releases, remakes, a symphony concert tour and an all-new blockbuster adventure. Junior product manager **Roger Langford** runs us through the celebrations

Who are you targeting with your Zelda celebrations?
We wanted to ensure that every fan could experience the celebrations in some way. The 25th Anniversary also offers the chance for newcomers to experience the *The Legend of Zelda* franchise for the first time.

In what way do the celebrations offer newcomers a chance?
The re-release of *Ocarina of Time* on 3DS gives fans an opportunity to experience one of the greatest games ever all over again with enhanced graphics and improved controls.

The culmination of the anniversary celebrations is of course the release of *The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword* on Wii. This all-new adventure takes players to the start of the Zelda timeline to learn how these adventures came to be.



Everyone can join in with the free DSiWare download of *Four Swords Anniversary Edition*. This offers everyone a chance to play one of the rarer *Zelda* titles. Simply log onto the DSiWare store on your 3DS or DSi console and download.

What makes The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword so special?
It represents one of the deepest and richest game experiences ever produced by Nintendo, taking more than 100 staff over five years to build.

Skyward Sword lets players guide Link on a journey that blends intense ground-based adventures with breathtaking exploration above the clouds.

For the first time in a *Zelda* game you can use Wii MotionPlus technology to experience a unique combat system. At launch we have a limited edition bundle containing a gold Wii Remote Plus.

Is it getting a suitably big marketing push?
Skyward Sword has been hotly anticipated since its initial reveal at E3 2010 and since then excitement for the game has been building. We started the marketing activity in August coinciding with the launch date announcement, including takeovers across all major gaming websites to herald the release date and also inform fans of the Limited Edition Gold Wii Remote Plus.

Since then we have continued our online push with MPUs running from September, across all major gaming sites. We have also had a host of print ads in all major gaming publications such as *Edge*, *GamesTM* and *GamesMaster*.

For the launch we'll be broadening out the campaign with 60- and 40-second TV ads. The ad will be in the most prominent of TV spots from the week of launch for two weeks. We also have one of our biggest ever online campaigns for launch, which will include taking over all major gaming sites as well portals such as *IMDB* and *Sky Sports* to ensure that all gamers know the most anticipated *Zelda* game ever is out on November 18th.

You have also taken Zelda on tour, how has that been received?
We gained nothing but positive feedback about our 25th Anniversary stand from GAMEfest, Eurogamer Expo as well as our Zelda 25th Anniversary takeover at GameCity. It is important to give fans a chance to experience *Skyward Sword* as early as possible so we can get the positive word of mouth out there.

What were your thoughts of the Zelda concert last month?
The 25th Anniversary Symphony was a magical experience for those that were lucky enough to attend. To have the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra performing such iconic themes was amazing to witness. Mr. Aonuma and Mr. Kondo also being in attendance was a treat for everyone. We had over 80 media attend from various outlets across Europe, which will translate into some excellent PR coverage for the event and the *Zelda* franchise.

RECOMMENDED

Your retail product guide to the latest and upcoming Zelda releases, including Skyward Sword

p14 **THE LEGEND OF ZELDA: SKYWARD SWORD**

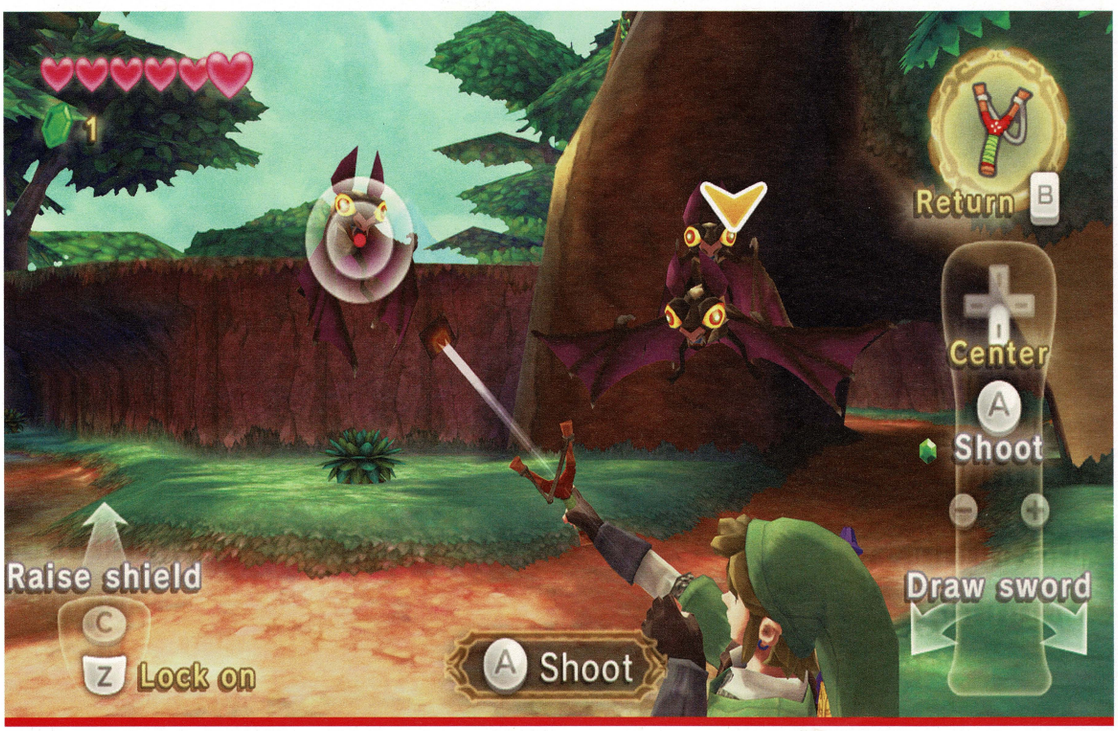
The biggest ever *Legend of Zelda* is finally here

10/10
"A triumph"
EDGE

16 OCARINA OF TIME 3D
The 1998 classic returns with new visuals and the Master Quest mode on 3DS

17 TWILIGHT PRINCESS
The 2006 smash hit epic is back on Wii as a part of Nintendo's Selects range

17 DOWNLOADABLE GAMES
Link's Awakening, Four Swords: Anniversary Edition and more are available to download



The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword

The smash-hit franchise returns in this striking new Wii adventure

NINTENDO'S most beloved franchise makes its triumphant return to consoles.

After a number of successful handheld quests, *The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword* is Link's first Wii adventure since *Twilight Princess*, which debuted alongside the Wii in 2006.

Now, gamers can return to the land of Hyrule in the most immersive *Zelda* to date. Using the Wii MotionPlus add-on, *Skyward Sword* grants fans direct, one-to-one control over their sword, bow, boomerang and more. Every strike, every shot and every motion will depend on the player's skill.

"*The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword* shakes up the tried-and-true adventure game formula and marks a turning point for the franchise," says Nintendo's UK junior product manager Roger Langford.

"The introduction of full motion controls enabled by Wii MotionPlus technology synchronises player movements with Link's actions while offering the most intuitive play control in the series to date."

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

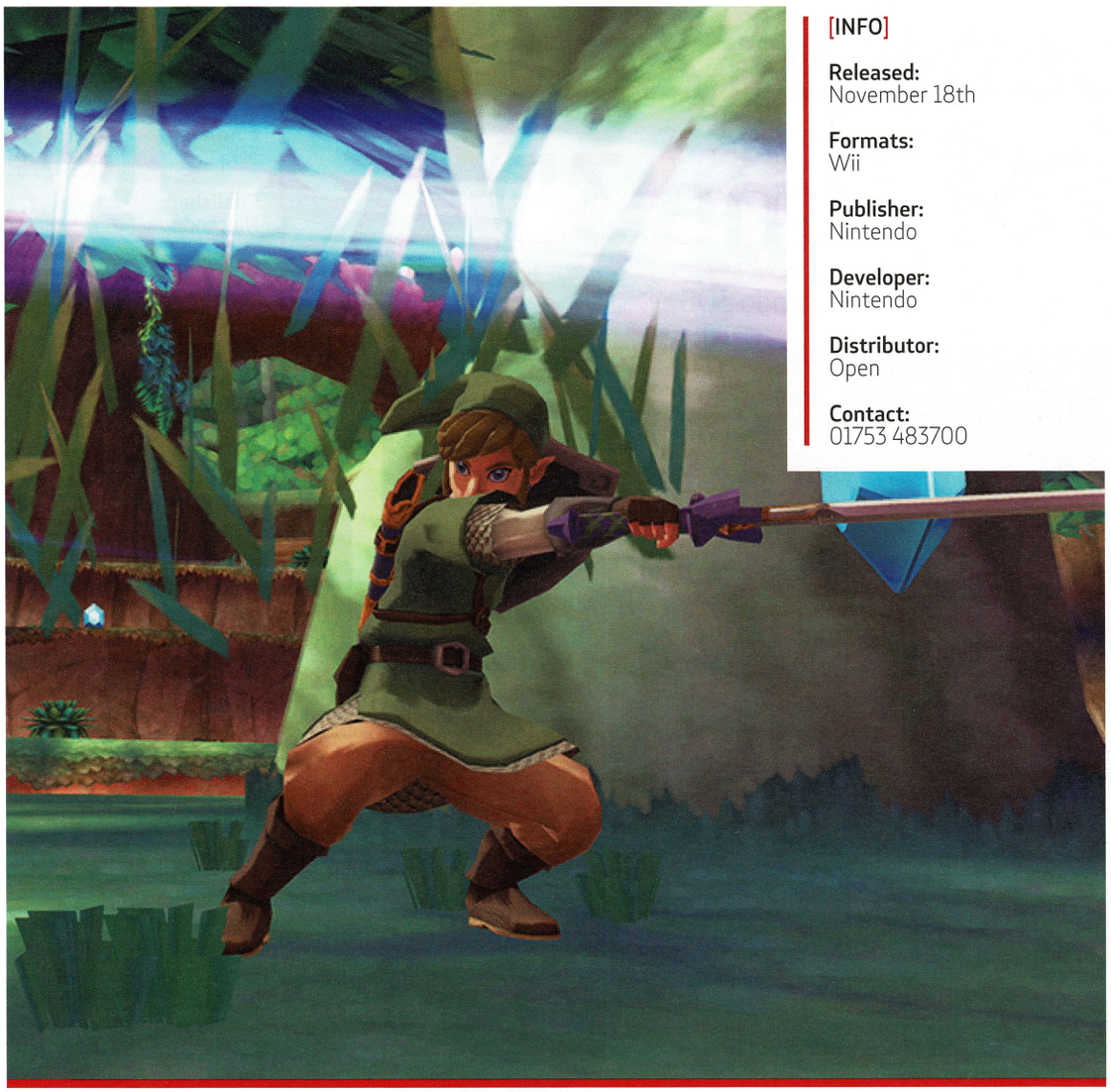
Skyward Sword takes Link and Zelda on a brand new quest that sets up the events of the critically acclaimed *Ocarina of Time*.

The pair start in the mystical Skyloft, a town that floats above the cloud. When Zelda is kidnapped, Link must scour the world below in order to rescue her. His journey will take him through deep forests, across scorching deserts and into the series' trademark puzzle-laden dungeons. Nintendo also says it is the biggest *Zelda* to date.

As if the substance of this new *Zelda* game wasn't enough, *Skyward Sword* is a beautiful game. It is presented in a glorious watercolour-esque art style, blending the cel shading of *The Wind Waker* and the realism of *Twilight Princess*.

Already the critics are raving about Nintendo's new adventure. *Edge* called *Skyward Sword* 'A triumph,' awarding the title a rare 10/10 score.

And with huge demand and a big marketing campaign in the works, retail can expect *Skyward Sword* to be the most legendary *Zelda* yet.



[INFO]

Released:
November 18th

Formats:
Wii

Publisher:
Nintendo

Developer:
Nintendo

Distributor:
Open

Contact:
01753 483700

LEGENDARY BUNDLE

Nintendo has prepared a special bundle for *Zelda* fans. The SKU features a copy of the game and a golden Wii RemotePlus, which also bears a *Zelda*-themed decal. The initial production run will also include the 25th Anniversary Symphony CD.

ZELDA: THE PREQUEL

Skyward Sword acts as a predecessor to the world's greatest game – *Ocarina of Time*. The original N64 classic was remade earlier this year for Nintendo 3DS and reached No.2 in the Chart-Track Top 40. You can read more about it on page 16.

CRITICAL LOVE

Already *The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword* is receiving huge critical praise. *Official Nintendo* gave the game a 98 per cent, while *Edge* awarded the title a 10/10– only the fourteenth time the publication has ever awarded a perfect score.

The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time 3D

The greatest game of all time is available now on Nintendo 3DS

[INFO]

Released:
Out now

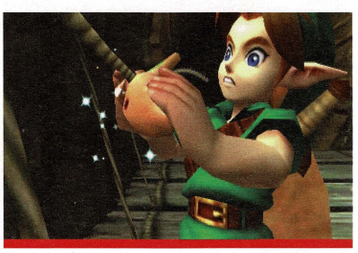
Formats:
3DS

Publisher:
Nintendo

Developer:
Grezzo

Distributor:
Open

Contact:
01753 483700



LEGENDARY STATUS

Ocarina of Time is widely seen as 'the greatest game of all time,' but *Ocarina of Time 3D* is no pale imitation. The game is the highest rated 3DS title with a 94 Metacritic score. *Eurogamer* awarded the 3DS title 10/10 saying that it "is one of the greatest things that video games have ever achieved." *Official Nintendo Magazine* went with 98, saying "It is nothing short of magical."

WHEN WRITING about a game considered to be one of the greatest of all time, it's easy to hark on about sales and ignore the finer details.

But to do that to Nintendo 64's 1998 release *Ocarina of Time* would do the game an injustice. Whether its riding a horse across the field of Hyrule or pulling the Master Sword from its stone, the game is full of magical moments that make it a true action adventure spectacle.

Gameplay is a blend of sword-based combat, exploration, puzzle-solving and collecting, with an array of weapons to discover – including a Hookshot that launches protagonist Link up to out-of-reach ledges.

Earlier this year Nintendo brought *Ocarina of Time* to 3DS with revised 3D graphics, touch screen and gyroscope functionality, as well as Boss Challenge and Master Quest modes for more experienced players – all running at 30 frames per second.

Nintendo UK junior product manager Roger Langford tells *MCV*: "*The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time 3D* takes one of the greatest games ever produced and adds a host of new features, making it an incredible experience for fans as well as the perfect entry point into the world of *Zelda* for newcomers."

STANDING THE TEST OF TIME

The original *Ocarina of Time* was Christmas No.1 and has the highest ever Metacritic score of 99.

Ocarina of Time 3D has followed in that game's footsteps, selling over 1m units by the end of its first month and boasting a Metacritic rating of 94. It debuted at No.2 in the Chart-Track All Formats Charts, with 20 per cent of the handheld's userbase buying the game in its first two days.

Still going strong, even after 13 years, *The Legend of Zelda: Ocarina of Time 3D* is an essential purchase for any 3DS owner.

The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess

The iconic Wii launch title returns at a new lower price

TWILIGHT PRINCESS remains one of the best Wii games.

Released as both a launch title for Wii releases and the swansong for GameCube, *Twilight Princess* bowled over critics. Its Metacritic score is 95. *Eurogamer* called it "an incredible game, with so many peaks and so many magic moments."

The adventure boasts a more realistic visual style to its predecessor – the equally excellent *Wind Waker*, and features horseback combat for the first time. Link can also transform into a wolf, with the Wii edition boasting motion functionality for aiming weapons and combat.

The story centres on a young farm boy named Link, who ends up on a quest to rescue Hyrule from an evil darkness. He has to travel to the Twilight Realm and scour the land with the help of a mysterious ally, a girl named Midna.

Nintendo has now brought the classic back to retail as one of its Nintendo Selects titles. Players who missed out first time, and who have had their interest piqued by the 25th Anniversary celebrations, can pick up the game from around £14.99.

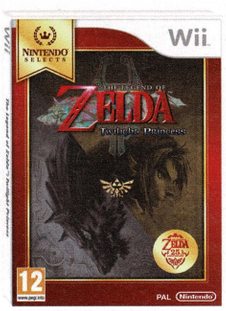
Released:
Out Now

Publisher:
Nintendo

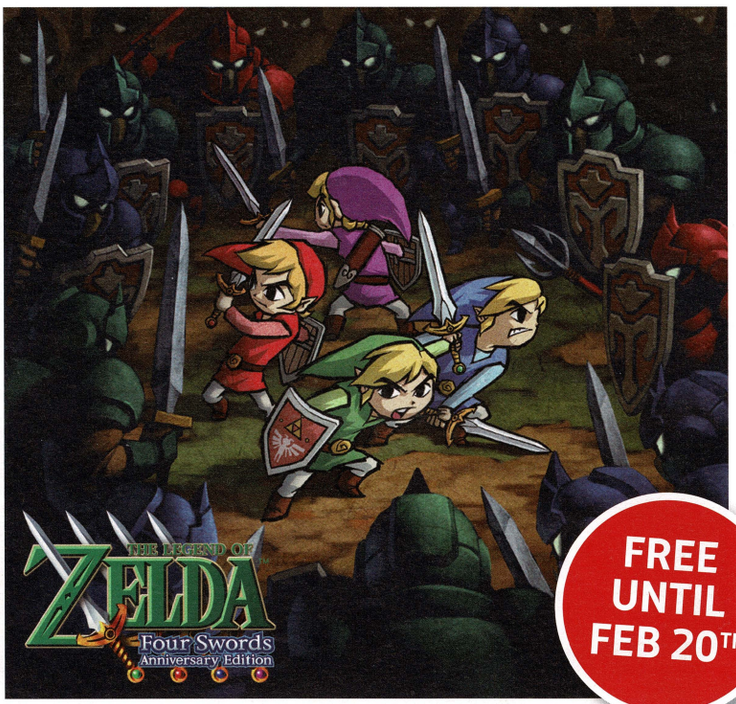
Developer:
Nintendo

Distributor:
Open

Contact:
01753 483700



Twilight Princess is now part of Nintendo's value-priced Selects range



Downloadable games

Publisher Nintendo has a range of Zelda titles available over its downloadable services

FOR THE online savvy *Zelda* fan, Nintendo has a range of titles available to download.

Via the Wii Virtual Console gamers can get their hands on the first five home console Zelda adventures – *The Legend of Zelda, Zelda II, A Link To The Past, Ocarina of Time* and *Majora's Mask*.

And this year Nintendo has added two more to the collection for 3DS and DSi – *The Legend of Zelda: Four Swords: Anniversary Edition* and the hit Game Boy title *Link's Awakening*.

Link's Awakening is a faithful port of the Game Boy Color remake, which boasts an extra dungeon and colour palette. Meanwhile *Four Swords* is an updated version of the original GBA hit.

Players must either control two heroes in single-player, or team up with up to four friends to defeat the evil Vaati.

This *Anniversary Edition* features a range of new stages and modes, including levels based on previous *Zelda* games in 'The Realm of Memories', and fans can also test their skills in 'The Hero's Trail'.

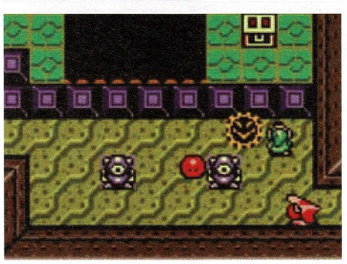
Best of all the game is free until February 20th 2012, so is an added reason for fans to pick up a 3DS or DSi.

Released:
Out Now

Publisher:
Nintendo

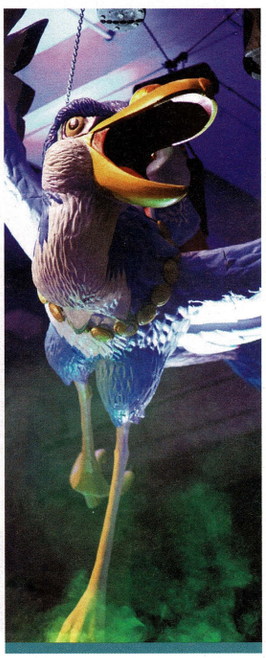
Developer:
Nintendo

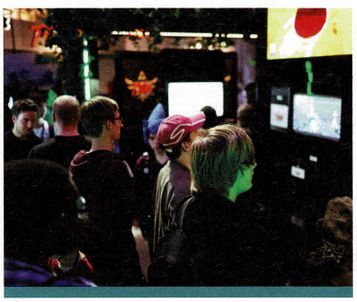
Distributor:
Nintendo eShop

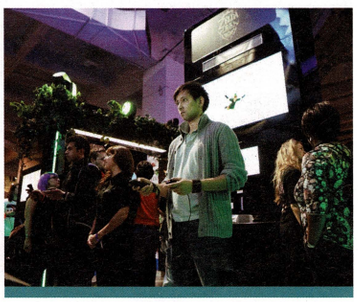


Link's Awakening is available exclusively on 3DS via Virtual Console

Nintendo takes The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword on tour, first to GAMEfest and Eurogamer Expo, then to the Golden Joystick Awards, before joining in the celebrations at the 25th Anniversary Symphony Concert in London

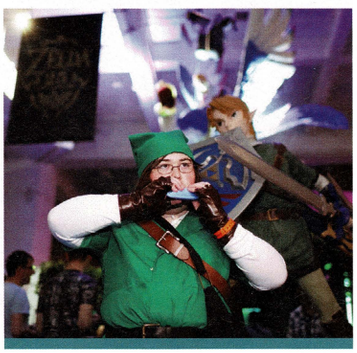


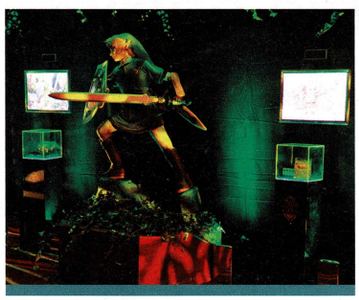


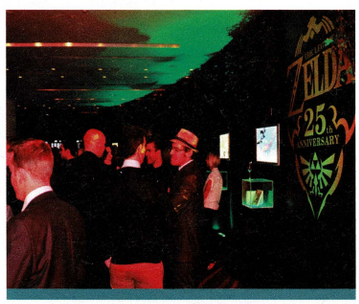


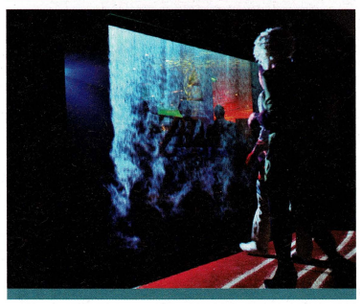
ZELDA ON TOUR

Nintendo has taken Zelda on tour this year, visiting consumer shows such as GAMEfest and Eurogamer Expo (*pictured*). As you'd expect from the avid fans, many turned up in Link and Zelda garb to play *Skyward Sword* and *Ocarina of Time 3D*. They could even win their very own Ocarina (of Time), although playing it didn't let them travel forwards in time until *Skyward Sword*'s launch day, despite their efforts (*right*).



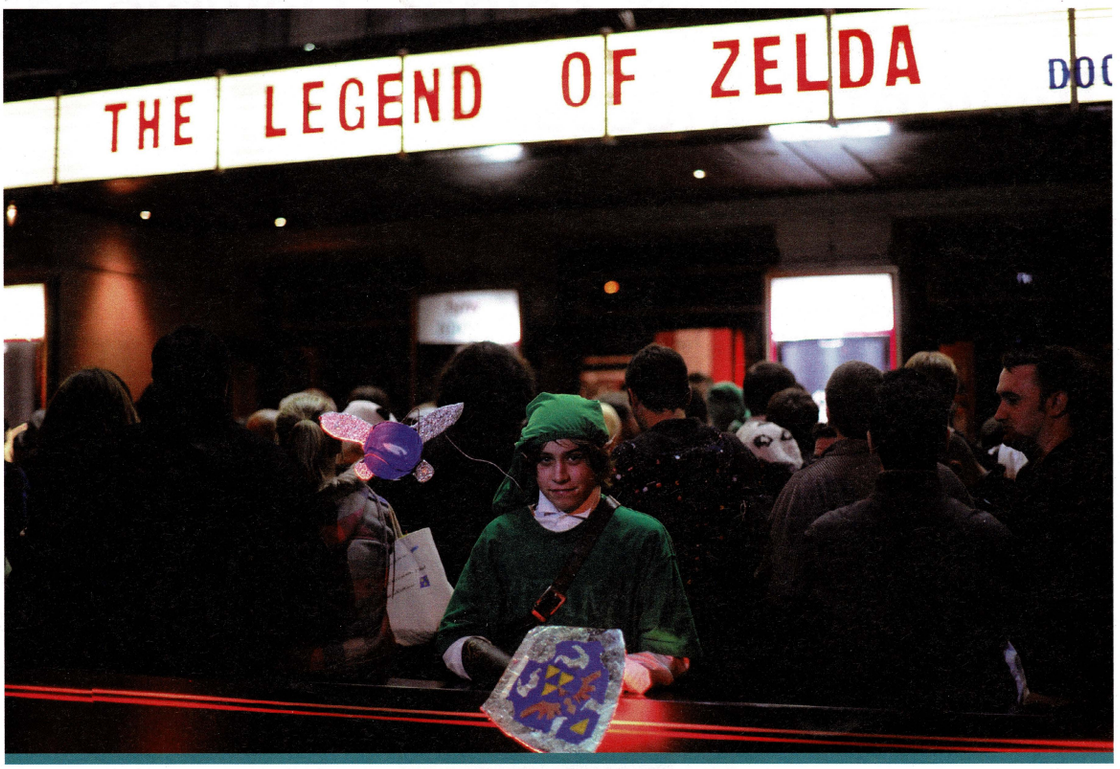


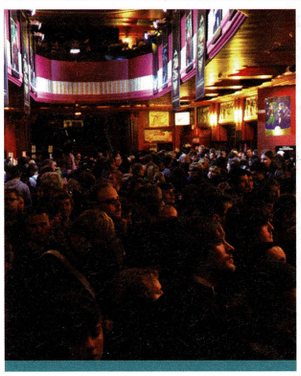




THE GOLDEN DEKU STICKS

Green hats, a Zelda exhibition, demo pods and a Link statue were the star attractions at the Golden Joystick after party last month. Most unusual was the wall of steam attendees had to walk through, which had a *Skyward Sword* trailer projected onto it.





THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC

Following a worldwide tour, the Zelda 25th Anniversary Concert reached its climax at the London Hammersmith Apollo last month. Thousands of dedicated (and dressed up) fans queued for hours to hear Koji Kondo's epic scores performed by the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Kondo himself performed a piano solo, celebrity fan Zelda Williams presented the event, while Eiji Aonuma also made an appearance.

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